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## PRECOLUMBIAN WEST INDIAN AMULETS

By J. WALTER FEWKES

In all large collections of prehistoric objects from the West Indies there occur small images carved from stone, shell, and bone, perforated for suspension from the person. Although many of these fetishes or amulets are known, few have been described or figured, and there is little recorded information as to their various forms. It is in the hope of adding to the knowledge of these objects that I have prepared this article.

The first known figures of West Indian prehistoric amulets appear on a map of Santo Domingo, dated 1731, published by Charlevoix.<sup>1</sup> This map bears under the figures the legend, "*Figures superstitieuses de Zemi ou Mabouya de la façon anciens Insulaires*," showing that the "religious" character of the objects was early recognized. The suggestion that they are *zemis*, or idols, which were tied to the forehead, was first made by Professor Mason more than a hundred and twenty-five years later.

Among the early figures of Santo Dominican amulets are those of Sr Antonio del Monte y Tejada, published in his *Historia de Santo Domingo*, 1853. Two of these represent frogs; the other four are the same as those figured in this article.

In a German translation of my Vice-presidential address, *Prehistoric Porto Rico*, delivered before Section H of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, the editor of *Globus* (Nos. 18, 19, 1902) has introduced four fine figures of two amulets from Gonaives island, Hayti.

<sup>1</sup> *Histoire de l'isle Espagnole ou de S. Dominique*, Paris, 1730-01. In his preface Charlevoix states that he obtained the manuscript of this work, with permission to publish it, from the author, Jean Baptiste le Pers. Mr H. Ling Roth says that, according to Margry, le Pers repudiated Charlevoix's publication. The second volume of Charlevoix's work is dated 1731, the year borne by the map in the first volume. Three figures of *zemis* are given on this map, one of which belongs to my first type of human-form amulets. It is more difficult to identify the others, especially the one said to have been found in an Indian burial. Its general form resembles a tripointed idol or mammiform stone, but as no profile of the conical projection characteristic of this form is given, my identification is doubtful.

The first figures of Porto Rican amulets known to me are those published in 1877 by Mason.<sup>1</sup> Three of the four figures given by him undoubtedly represent amulets, but the fourth, called a "lizard-shaped amulet" (on account of a network of lines on the body, supposed to indicate scales), shows no head, thus rendering exact identification of the object impossible.

So far as known Mason was also the first American writer to identify the perforated figures as amulets, adding to his descriptions of them the significant statement that "the inhabitants of Hispaniola, on the authority of Friar Roman (Irving's *Columbus*, I, p. 390), had small images of their gods which they bound about their foreheads when they went to battle." He also points out that the inhabitants of the Lesser Antilles likewise used amulets, and thus refers to one of these objects in the Guesde collection: "The principal amulet is of carbonate of lime in bladed crystallization. It represents a *mabouya* (evil spirit) with bended arms and legs and the virile organ in a state of action. The shoulders are pierced posteriorly to allow of the suspension of the amulet."

Dr J. E. Duerden<sup>2</sup> thus writes of amulets from Jamaica:

"In 1879 Mr C. P. O'R. de Montagnac discovered two small stone images on some recently disturbed ground at Rennock Lodge, situated on a small plateau at a height of about 400 feet up the Long Mountain. They were associated with accumulations of marine shells and fragments of pottery, such as are met with on the top of the hill at Weireka. The larger is a neatly carved representation of a human head and neck, and is perforated behind for suspension. It is  $2\frac{3}{4}$  inches long and  $1\frac{5}{8}$  inches from ear to ear; the body below the neck has been broken off. The material is a soft crystalline limestone, scratching readily with a knife, and forms a marble of a greyish or slightly greenish color, such as is found in various parts of the island, especially at the eastern end. The upper part of the head bears some resemblance to that figured in *Flint Chips* (p. 227, fig. 6), occurring on the top of a carved stone pestle found in Hayti. The nose, chin, eyes and ears are clearly distinguished; the perforation is  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch in diameter and extends for  $1\frac{1}{4}$  inches through the upper part of the neck.

<sup>1</sup> The Latimer Collection of Antiquities from Porto Rico, in the National Museum at Washington, D. C.; *Smithsonian Report* for 1876, Washington, 1877.

<sup>2</sup> Aboriginal Indian Remains in Jamaica, *Jour. Inst. Jamaica*, vol. II, No. 4, p. 44, July, 1897.

"The smaller object is  $1\frac{1}{4}$  inches long and is likewise incomplete below. Though made of the same kind of stone, the figure is of a different shape, the facial characters not being well pronounced. It is broken at the sides, but there is a suggestion that arms were represented raised high as the shoulders, such as is shown in the 'Latimer collection,' fig. 32. . . .

"These two objects, so far as the Museum collections show, are the only ones belonging to this group of aboriginal relics hitherto found in Jamaica; though, as above quoted, somewhat similar examples are known from other parts of the West Indies."

Duerden follows Mason in regarding these objects as frontal amulets, and quotes Peter Martyr's reference to the small idols which the natives tied to their foreheads. "They were probably worn," writes Duerden, "or carried about the person and intended to act as charms or preservatives against evil or mischief."

Many precolumbian amulets were seen in Santo Domingo and Porto Rico during my late visit, several of which differ from any of those figured by the writers above mentioned. Although this article is written more especially to describe these new and unusual forms, others are included which closely resemble the amulets already considered by these authors. Some of the perforated fetishes or amulets of the Antilleans had human or animal shapes, others were stones of unusual forms which I am unable to identify. With the limited material available it would be premature to claim that a classification of West Indian amulets would be more than provisional at the present time, but of those having human forms there are two types which are readily recognized. In addition to these two types there are other forms representing animals, as frogs, reptiles, and birds.

The first of the two types mentioned is characterized by the arms and hands being raised to the ears or above the head. This unusual attitude occurs also in relief images on the rims of earthenware vessels and in some of those which decorate the ends of stone pestle handles. Possibly the hands were represented in this unnatural position to suggest the attitude of a burden-bearing god or goddess, whose personator in ceremonies supported a bundle on the head or back in this way. The attitude recalls an idol of the Calchaqui of

Argentina, figured by Ambrosetti,<sup>1</sup> which he is inclined to identify as that of an earth goddess. The sex of the majority of amulets in human shape from Santo Domingo is not generally represented, but one specimen was undoubtedly intended for a male.

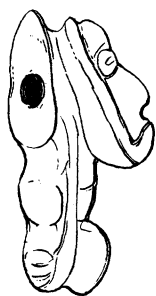
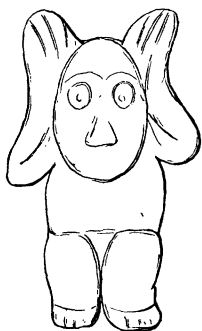
Amulets with arms raised above or at the sides of the head are not always figures of human beings, for in some instances these fetishes have bodies of animals and heads more or less anthropomorphic in character. Nevertheless this characteristic position of the arms is a good feature to use in a provisional classification of the human-formed fetishes.

One of the finest specimens of amulets of this type, or in fact of any kind, is owned by Mr Edward Hall, director of the railroad from Puerto Plata to Santiago, Santo Domingo. This beautiful amulet (pl. LII, 2, 3) is made of white stone and measures an inch and a half in length. Viewed from the front it will be noted that the arms are raised above the head, that the legs are retracted, and that the knees project on each side. The body is small, hardly equaling in length that of the face. A side view (fig. 2) shows that the head rises from the chest, and that the body is perforated from one side to the other. This specimen is said to have once belonged to a cacique, and to have been found near the headwaters of the Yaque river which flows through the Vega Real.<sup>2</sup>

There is in the Imbert collection another amulet (pl. LII, 3) of the same type, found in Guanabino (Santiago). When seen from the side (fig. 4) the head apparently projects directly from the chest, as in the specimen last mentioned. The specimen is light-brown in color, and is a little more than an inch in length. The front view shows that the shoulders are raised to the side of the head (a position necessitated by the position of the latter), but the hands do not extend above the head. The legs are contracted as in the last specimen, and the toes point sidewise. The back of the specimen (fig. 5) is flat, with an elliptical depression at the level of the eyes.

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, figs. 23a-23d. There are many resemblances between Arawak prehistoric objects and those of the Calchaqui of Argentina. These likenesses, like those of the Pueblos to the Calchaqui, are interesting coincidences of independent origin.

<sup>2</sup> The figures on plates LII and LIII are copies of my drawings of specimens owned by Sr Ramón Imbert and Mr Edward Hall. I take this opportunity to thank these gentlemen for permission to publish the drawings.

**1****2****8****9****3****4****5****6****7****10****11**

The lateral perforations which served for suspension open into this cavity.

Another amulet of the same type (pl. LII, 6, 7) is also found in the Imbert collection. The figure of this specimen has the hands raised above the head and the knees brought together in front.

A similar position of the legs appears in the specimen shown in pl. LII, 8, 9, in which no arms are represented. The head is cut at the end of the body and not on one side. This object, also from the Imbert collection, measures two inches in length and is perforated through the back.

The first type of amulets is represented in my Porto Rican collections by a specimen of which three views are shown in the accompanying pl. LIII, 1-3. This object, which closely resembles that represented in Mason's figure 32, was purchased from Sr Benito Fernandez of Loquillo, together with many other specimens of aboriginal manufacture from eastern Porto Rico. This smoothly polished amulet is made of light-green stone mottled with black. It measures two inches in length, and a little less than an inch across the shoulders and hips. Seen from the front, the head seems to rise directly from the chest, but from the side the neck is seen to be a mere constriction. The nose and chin are prominent, but the eyes and mouth are only obscurely indicated; there are incised horizontal lines across the forehead; the arms are raised, and scratches representing fingers appear at the sides of the head in the normal place of the shoulders. The legs are contracted, giving the figure a squatting attitude, and the toes are indicated by markings. A virile organ is prominent. Two perforations for suspension are drilled at the edges of the shoulders, and a depression marks the middle line of the back.

There are three amulets of this kind in the Latimer collection, one of which is figured by Mason. These specimens came from Porto Rico, and it is probable that an amulet in the Guesde collection, from Guadeloupe, to which he refers, belongs to the same type. There are other amulets of this form in the Nazario collection.

I have not found an amulet like the last mentioned among the collections from Santo Domingo, and it is believed that the form is

distinctly characteristic of Porto Rico ; but as the natives of the two islands frequently passed from one island to the other in precolumbian times, it is possible that this particular form will sooner or later be found in the former island. The failure to find this form of amulet in Cuba, Santo Domingo, and Jamaica, its existence in numbers in Porto Rico where there was considerable Carib blood, and a record of it from the Lesser Antilles, which at the time of Columbus were occupied by Caribs, make it possible that this form of amulet is Carib rather than Arawak.<sup>1</sup>

The amulet represented in plate LIII, 9, 10, belongs also to the first type. This object is figured in Mason's figure 33, but the figure is misleading because the artist has represented a forearm on the side of the body instead of above the head. It is doubtful whether this amulet was intended to represent a human being or an animal. (Compare the specimens shown in pl. LII, 8, 9.)

The second type of West Indian amulets of human form has the head placed normally on the body, so that the shoulders are brought to their proper position, the arms being represented on the chest, abdomen, or knees, or in front of the body. In this type the legs are brought together in such a way that the knees, and in some cases the extremities, are so imperfectly carved that this region of the amulet resembles that of a mummy. As shown in the figures, there is considerable variation in the forms of the amulets included in this type.

A good specimen of the second type, in the Imbert collection (pl. LII, 10, 11), was found at Yasicá. It is made of light-brown stone and measures two and one-half inches in length. The face is carved slightly in relief ; the eyes consist of two dots enclosed in a dumb-bell shaped figure, while the teeth are simply scratched on the convex surface. The fingers are indicated by parallel marks, the legs and toes being made in a somewhat similar way. A side view of the amulet (fig. 11) shows perforations at the level of the mouth. The head and body are not differentiated, the backs of both being simply rounded.

<sup>1</sup> *Notas de Arqueología Calchaquí*, fig. 23, a-d, Buenos Aires, 1899. While the art products of the Antilleans are *sui generis*, they are more characteristic of the Arawak than of the Carib people of South America. Antillean art was comparatively pure Arawak in Cuba and Santo Domingo, but in the Lesser Antilles it was mixed with Carib.



AMULETS FROM SANTO DOMINGO AND PORTO RICO

Another amulet (pl. LIV, 1) of the same type, also from the Imbert collection, was found in Janico by Sr José Tolentino. It is made of white stone and measures three and one-quarter inches in length. The eyes are enclosed by an incised dumb-bell like figure, the mouth, teeth, and cheeks being indicated by incised lines. No relief work is attempted in representing the arms, and the fingers are mere parallel marks near a pit surrounded by a circle intended for the umbilicus. The legs are comparatively large;<sup>1</sup> no toes are represented.

Another amulet (pl. LIV, 2, 3) in the Imbert collection, made of white stone and found at Ysabela by Sr Luis Passailaique, measures three and a half inches long and has arms appressed to the sides of the body, the fingers being indicated by incised lines. The back is slightly concave and the face is cut in low relief. Perforations, intended like the others for suspension of the object, are situated on the back on each edge at a level with the mouth. Leg-bands are indicated by lateral wart-like elevations near the position of the knees, and the toes are faintly marked.

Pl. LIV, 4-6, represents a shell amulet in the Imbert collection which also was obtained at Ysabela by Señor Passailaique. It is about two and one-quarter inches in length, and is well polished and carved. The image has a squatting posture, the knees being brought together and the body resting on the toes. The head bears carvings supposed to represent feathers; the eye-sockets and the mouth are deep; the teeth are well indicated; the left ear is broken, the right entirely gone. The arms are closely appressed to the sides of the body, and the closed hands are raised to the chest, the palms facing outward. The shoulders, knees, and feet are continued as raised bands across the back of the amulet. The perforation for suspension is situated on a level with the mouth.

An amulet from Santo Domingo, of polished dark-brown stone, purchased from Archbishop Meriña, is shown in pl. LIII, 3-5. The

<sup>1</sup> In describing a most instructive effigy vase from Santo Domingo, Pinart comments on the large size of the legs, as follows: "*Ceci est curieux au plus haut degre car ces signes sont ceux tres caracteristiques de l'elephantiasis si commun dans les Indiens.*" Although the abnormal size of the legs is marked in the effigy vase which Pinart figures, as well as in a similar specimen of which I have photographs, it is questionable whether the maker of either specimen intended to represent a person afflicted with elephantiasis.

head is comparatively well cut, but the body and the limbs are more obscure. The back is flat, and holes for suspension are drilled at the edges.

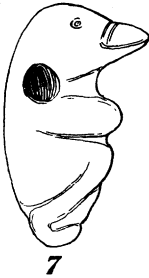
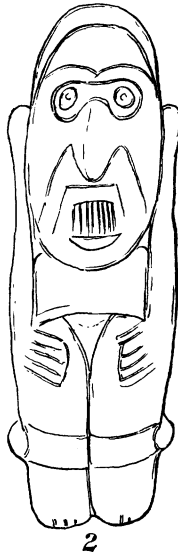
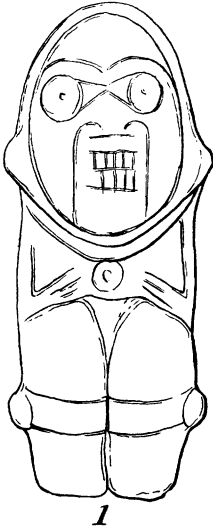
A smaller amulet of white stone (pl. LIII, 7, 8), also purchased from the Archbishop, has a well-formed head, with forehead flattened as was the Antillean custom. The arms and fingers are indicated by lines, not by relief work; the legs are divided merely by a median line, and a few indistinct scratches represent the toes. The back is smooth and slightly rounded. The perforation extends completely through the amulet from side to side, below the ears, having been drilled from each side until the holes met, but the union is not perfect.

A very rare form of amulet, representing twin figures united at the sides, was purchased from Archbishop Meriña of Santo Domingo.<sup>1</sup> The face, eyes, nose, and mouth of each of the two component images are well made, but there are only two ears instead of four. The fingers are indicated by incised markings on the abdomen, showing that the specimen belongs to the second type of amulets representing human forms. Although imperfectly indicated, the lower extremities bear marks representing bands with which, according to early writers, the Caribs were accustomed to bind the calves of their legs. There are two drilled perforations, one at the outer edge of each component figure. This amulet is similar in size and form to an "*amuleto para amor*" from Argentina described and figured by Ambrosetti.<sup>2</sup> Although this author does not give the locality from which the twin amulet noted by him was found, it probably came, like others he describes, from the Calchaqui region. His identification of twin amulets as representations of the Inca god Huacanqui, or Cayam Carumí, is supported by a quotation from Montesinos<sup>3</sup> to the effect that the idol, or *guaca*, of lovers was "*una piedra o blanca, o negra, o parda liza, que hacen apariencias de dos personas que se abrazan.*" Although it closely resembles the Calchaqui specimen, there is no reason to suppose that the twin amulet from Santo Domingo bears any relation to the Incan idol.

<sup>1</sup> See *Smithsonian Misc. Coll.*, vol. 45, pl. xxxviii, Washington, 1903.

<sup>2</sup> *Notas de Arqueología Calchaquí*, p. 33, Buenos Aires, 1899.

<sup>3</sup> *Memorias Antiguas Historiales del Peru.*



In addition to the two types of amulets in human form above considered, there occur in West Indian collections small perforated images of animals, including birds, reptiles, and frogs.<sup>1</sup>

The only amulet of bird form here figured (pl. LIV, 7, 8), although I know of other specimens, belongs to Mr Hall of Puerto Plata, who has mounted the object as a watch-chain ornament. This specimen is finely made of dark brown or horn-colored stone, and measures an inch and a quarter in length. The beak is prominent, the wings are drawn to the breast, and the tail is marked with parallel lines indicating feathers. The perforation extends completely through the body at the level of the neck.

Another animal-shaped amulet (pl. LIV, 9-11), also owned by Mr Hall, is made of green stone; it is two inches long and is said to have been found in the Sierra del Serra, south of Santiago de los Caballeros. It is difficult in this specimen to recognize limbs, although the two appendages midway of its length may have been designed to represent flippers or fins. The two pits on one side were evidently intended for eyes. The general form of this amulet suggests an animal, and it may have been intended to represent a manatee or sea-cow.

Mention may here be made of two beautiful and unique amulets, one of shell and the other of bone, which were purchased in Santo Domingo from Archbishop Meriña.<sup>2</sup> The latter specimen is a complete image of human shape, while that made of shell is non-descript, having a highly conventionalized body without limbs and a realistically carved head.

It was my good fortune to see, in private collections, many amulets different in form from those here described and figured, an account of which would increase our knowledge of the variety of amulet forms from the West Indies. Among these may be mentioned two frog-shaped amulets of black stone in the excellent Nazario collection at Guayanilla, near Ponce, Porto Rico.

<sup>1</sup> It is difficult to tell whether some of these animals represent human beings or animals. For example, the body of the amulet shown in pl. LIII, 9, 10, has a distinctly human form, but the head is that of an animal. Mason's figure of the same specimen shows obscurely drawn arms on the side of the body, but I find no indication of such on the specimen itself.

<sup>2</sup> See Fewkes, Preliminary Report, in *Smithsonian Misc. Coll.*, vol. 45, pl. XLVIII, 1903.

While it is possible that some of the amulets above described may not have been bound to the foreheads of the natives, it is at least probable, as indicated by the perforations, that they were attached to or suspended from some part of the head or body. It is known that caciques wore on their breasts gold ornaments called *guanin*, since the custom is mentioned in an account of a battle with the Indians when Ponce shot a cacique (supposed to have been Aguebana II) thus adorned. As none of these gold objects escaped the rapacity of the early conquerors, and as no detailed description of them is known, it is impossible to say whether they were amulets as well as insignia of rank.

There is a striking similarity between some of the West Indian amulets and those found in Mexico. As a rule those from the Antilles are not so characteristic in shape and are not so well made as those from the mainland of Central America. We should expect to find a wider distribution of these small objects than of the larger idols, from the fact that they are more easily transported; but this distribution is not necessarily indicative of racial kinship of the owners of these objects. The similarity between Antillean and South American amulets is marked, but I find no resemblance between those from Porto Rico and from the mainland north of Mexico.

The objects described in the preceding pages are supposed to be identical with the small idols called *zemis* by early writers, who declare that the natives bound them to their foreheads when they went to war. A reference to Roman Pane's statement that the islanders wore *zemis* in this manner has already been made. Peter Martyr<sup>1</sup> describes certain idols used by the people of Hispaniola in their worship, which were undoubtedly amulets. He says: "These images the inhabitants call *zemis*, whereof the leaste, made to the likenesse of young devilles, they bind to their foreheades when they goe to the warres against their enemies." Francisco Lopez de Gomara,<sup>2</sup> in describing the customs of the Indians of Hispaniola, says: "*Atanse a la frente Idolos chiquitos quando quieren pelear.*" (They bind little idols to their foreheads when they wish to fight.)

<sup>1</sup> Dec. I, lib. IX, pp. 50-54.

<sup>2</sup> *Historia de las Indias*, p. 24, Antwerp, 1554.

Similar statements made by other writers in the early half of the sixteenth century are frequently quoted in more modern works.

The difference in the forms of these amulets might have been due to the desire to indicate, by them, the clans of the wearers, were it not for the fact that the images are so small and consequently inconspicuous that they would have been useless for such a purpose ; but it is quite probable that the custom of painting the zemi or totem on the body was with this intention.<sup>1</sup> It is much more probable that the frontal amulets were regarded as efficacious against occult evil influences, the owner relying for protection on their magic power, in which respect they resemble all amulets. Their attachment to the forehead naturally suggests the phylacteries of the Jews.

It is probable that, in addition to the amulets which the Caribs and the Antilleans bound on their foreheads when they went to war, these people had numerous other amulets, some of which were worn on the neck or on other parts of the body or limbs. Those here considered have the form of small idols and were designed as pendants, but the aborigines also had other objects which were not suspended from the body, although likewise used as protective charms.<sup>2</sup>

Roman Pane has given a full account of the usages of the medicine men, or *boii*, of the islanders, which is interesting in this connection. From his description, which accords in general with primitive medicinal practices among other tribes, I will quote that portion which bears directly on the way in which a stone object, later used as a fetish, was presumably taken from the patient :<sup>3</sup>

“The *boii* having purged himself and taken his own drug (a custom not recommended to the modern physician), rises and goes to the sick man, . . . takes him by the legs, feels his thighs, descending by degrees to his feet, then draws hard as if he would pull something off ; then he

<sup>1</sup> I have been informed that the country people at Boya, the old pueblo in Santo Domingo where the Indians under Henriquillo were settled, “sometimes paint designs on their faces in red as the Indians used to do.”

<sup>2</sup> Im Thurn speaks of the natives of Guiana carrying worn stones to which they ascribe occult powers. There are innumerable other instances of this general custom among different races which may be explained on the theory of a belief in their efficacy against evil influences or practices.

<sup>3</sup> This translation is taken from H. Ling Roth, *Journ. Anth. Inst. of Great Britain*, vol. XVI, pp. 254-255.

goes to the door, shuts it, and says, 'begone to the mountain or to the sea or whither thou wilt,' and giving a blast as if he blew something away, turns about, clasps his hands together, shuts his mouth, his hands quake as if he were a cold, he blows on his hand, and then draws in his blast as if sucking the marrow of a bone, sucks the man's neck, stomach, shoulders, jaws, breast, belly and several other parts of his body. This done, they begin to cough and make faces, as if they had eaten some bitter thing, and the doctor pulls out that we have said he put into his mouth at home or by the way, whether stone, flesh or bone . . . 'if it be a stone,' he says, 'keep it safe.' Sometimes they take it for certain that these stones are good, and help women in labor whereupon they keep them carefully wrapped up in cotton, putting them into little baskets, giving them such as they themselves eat, and the same they do to the *zemis* they have in their homes."<sup>1</sup>

Many instances of the use of charms and amulets still survive in the practices of the negro "conjure-men" of Porto Rico, but it is difficult to distinguish those of Indian from those of African descent. Of these charms several might be mentioned, thus the *uña de la gran bestia*, or "nail of the great beast,"<sup>2</sup> is ordinarily tied in a packet of tinfoil, wrapped in cloth, and worn about the neck by the negroes as a protection. Among Porto Rican peons Indian stone celts are called *piedras de rayo*, or thunder-stones, and are used to cure certain diseases — a usage which may have been perpetuated from prehistoric times when strangely shaped stones were kept as fetishes or were used by the medicine-men for the same purpose.

In the same category, and of the same doubtful origin, may be mentioned the so-called "*collar hechecero*," or wizard collar, which can be purchased from conjurors, or, I am told, from certain dealers in obscure places in Porto Rico. These collars consist of strings or pieces of tape as long as a man's spine, with knots tied at intervals, the number of which equals that of the ribs or the vertebrae. Through each of these knots are stuck two pins in the form of a

<sup>1</sup> "Feeding" of fetishes and other images is a common practice among primitive idolators, and almost every special student might give instances of the usage among tribes which he has studied. The Hopi, for instance, put food to the mouths of their stone idols.

<sup>2</sup> According to Gumilla (*El Orinoco ilustrado*, I, p. 300) among the Achaquas of the Orinoco *la gran bestia* is the tapir. Its hoof (*uña*) was regarded as efficacious in curing the *gota coral* (falling sickness) and was tied about the neck of the sufferer for that purpose.

cross.<sup>1</sup> This collar is believed to have the power of causing or of averting harm at the will of the owner.

When the practices of the West Indian "conjure-man" are studied, it will doubtless be found that he still preserves the same general methods as the ancient *boii*, or aboriginal West Indian sorcerer, having merely modified the usages of the latter or replaced them with others, equally primitive, which his slave ancestors brought from Africa. To what extent the West Indian conjure-man of to-day has been influenced by aboriginal sorcery is not now known, but the subject is well worthy of study, and a rich field for research awaits the folklorist in Santo Domingo and Porto Rico.

Each amulet above described was doubtless employed, as were other fetishes, for its own particular magic power. Some of them, no doubt, were regarded as efficacious in protecting the wearer from death or disease, others were believed to cause the crops to grow or the rain to fall, while still others were used to aid women in childbirth. The form of fetish specially adapted for each of these or a hundred other needs is unknown, as no writer contemporary with their use has enlightened us in that regard; but it is not beyond the range of possibility that there may still survive among the Arawak tribes of South America information which will aid in their interpretation, and indeed it is possible that like amulets have not wholly passed out of use in the little known interior of Santo Domingo.

The number of amulets herein described and figured is inconsiderable compared with the many which renewed research will doubtless bring to light, and it is hoped that this article, incomplete though it is, may aid others in making more of these interesting objects known to science.

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<sup>1</sup> It is said that the country people of the island sometimes embroider a cross on the shirt or undergarment of *novias*, or brides, to ensure constancy. I mention these customs, not because they are Indian survivals, but as practices still in vogue which may be aboriginal.